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"Mrs. America Volunteers"

Oct. 28, 1941

A broadcast by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, October 28, 1941, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, over stations associated with the NBC Blue Network.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

Following along with old good old Tuesday custom, Ruth Van Deman's with us again today. And as usual she brings news and suggestions growing out of the home economics research of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

By the way, Ruth, here's a suggestion you might like to follow up sometime.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Delighted. Let's have it.

KADDERLY:

This comes from one of our listeners in Illinois ... La Salle, Illinois, the post-mark is ... October 14.

VAN DEMAN:

That was the day we talked about ways to stop food wastes.

KADDERLY:

Yes, the letter mentions that. Let me read you: "The suggestions today about stopping wastes in the kitchen are so very valuable, they should be repeated frequently. Also planning all the way from 5 meals to a week's supply is even more important...We have tested marketing once a week for a large family, 10 counting guests. We find it saves money, saves time, saves delay and disappointment in deliveries from the market. What we need though is more menus for limited incomes, giving adequate nutrition for adults and children."

How about it, Ruth? Think the Bureau of Home Economics could do that sometime?

VAN DEMAN:

This only happens once in a blue moon. I have what the lady wants right here in my hand now. This new issue of Consumers' Guide - "Mrs. America Volunteers."

KADDERLY:

You mean that has low-cost meal plans?

VAN DEMAN:

Surely it has. And a week's marketing list to build the meal plans from. A master list that any size family can make its own.

KADDERLY:

Well, I'll be blessed. I thought the thing we were going to talk about today, "Mrs. America Volunteers," meant volunteering for community service.... in the school lunch project or something like that.

VAN DEMAN:

The school lunch does need volunteers in practically every community. But so does the home kitchen. And right now thousands - maybe it wouldn't be an overstatement to say millions - of women are volunteering to do a better job with food.

KADDERLY:

Well, there couldn't be any bigger job or better job than feeding hungry people. ... And by hungry I'm thinking of the meaning the nutrition experts have taught us for hungry ... the kind of hunger that maybe you don't even feel, but that undermines health and takes away the joy in living.

VAN DEMAN:

Thanks, Wallace, for lining out the target.

KADDERLY:

What do you mean?

VAN DEMAN:

That's what Mrs. America is shooting at. She knows food is not just something to cook and put on the table three times a day. She knows that food - right food - helps to build her children strong, and straight, and sturdy. She knows that food gives us what it takes to do our jobs ... keeps our nerves steady ... gives us a sense of security and well-being.

KADDERLY:

That's why she's volunteering to do a better job with the family food.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, she sees her kitchen job as part of the whole big job of making America Stronger.

Now getting on with the market list for low-cost food for a week. Turn there in the Guide to page 4. ... You see the list is put up in pounds, and quarts, and so on, for all the kinds of food in a well-balanced diet.

KADDERLY:

I suppose this meets the yardstick for good nutrition, - the yardstick adopted by the National Nutrition Conference last May?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, that's why Dr. Stiebeling worked out this new plan. It's somewhat different from the diet plans she put out before. It's keyed right in with what the yardstick recommends for vitamins, and minerals, and calories, and protein. Those are all figured into the recommended quantities of everyday foods.

KADDERLY:

Milk leads off, I see. Then come potatoes - white and sweet ... beans ... fruits and vegetables ... eggs ... meat, poultry, fish ... cereals ... that takes in bread I suppose.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, bread, flour, breakfast cereals.

KADDERLY:

And winding up at the end are the fats and sugars.

VAN DEMAN:

Grouping the foods that way gives the general plan for a well-balanced diet. ... And for ten people to eat it, you'll find them listed in the up-and-down column at the left.

KADDERLY:

I see ... children and women first, as should be. Then men, and the men divided up according to the kind of work they do.

VAN DEMAN:

So are the women too. We eat according to the way we work, or at least we should.

KADDERLY:

It's almost like having an expert dietitian at you elbow - to have a master plan like this to figure the week's market order from.

VAN DEMAN:

That's exactly the service we're trying to give. When Mrs. America volunteers she's entitled to facts from the experts.

And this time the experts didn't stop with just figuring out the quantities of food each person needs each week. They picked a family of four - a man, a woman, and two boys, and carried their food order right through from the market, to the kitchen, to the dining table, to each person's plate.

KADDERLY:

You mean a family ate this food for a week?

VAN DEMAN:

I do. Don't you see there Mrs. America cooking and the family eating?

KADDERLY:

I see the picture.

VAN DEMAN:

Those pictures were taken while one of these weekly market orders was getting the kitchen and table test, under the eye of the experts. ... Turn over to page 10 and you'll see some of the menus they had.

KADDERLY:

(reading) "These dinners can be made from the low-cost marketing list."

VAN DEMAN:

How does the first one there strike you?

KADDERLY:

Beef and vegetable stew. Dumplings. Potatoes in jackets. Wholewheat or enriched bread. Stewed dried fruit. Cookies. Milk for children. ... Sounds good.

VAN DEMAN:

Of course it's not fancy food. It can't be at such low cost. And to make that good a dinner from the foods on the list, it keeps a woman on her toes as a smart meal planner and a good cook.

KADDERLY:

There are no substitutes for smart meal planning and good cooking if you want good food at any price.

VAN DEMAN:

Never a truer word spoken, Wallace. Over there in the back part of the Guide, you'll find a liberal marketing list - a list for Mrs. America who doesn't have to watch the pennies quite so closely.

KADDERLY:

Here?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, that one called "health and fun for Mrs. America."

KADDERLY:

She's going for the fresh fruits and vegetables in a big way in this picture.

VAN DEMAN:

That's where she's smart. With the money she has to spend, she's buying vitamins in the natural form.

KADDERLY:

And of course she can buy more lean meat too ... and eggs, and butter.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, more of those foods make meal planning easier, and the chances of a good diet better. But, you know, it doesn't always follow as the night the day that families who spend plenty for food buy themselves good nutrition.

KADDERLY:

I know. And even for the farm family that can grow part of its own, it takes thoughtful planning.

VAN DEMAN:

That's why Mrs. Rural America is volunteering in a bigger way than ever before. She's already planning next year's garden, so that more of the commercial truck crops can be released for people who have no land.

KADDERLY:

Couldn't a farm homemaker multiply these weekly market lists by 52 and make them her year-round plan?

VAN DEMAN:

Very easily.

KADDERLY:

What about this slogan, here, in the Guide? How about posting this by the kitchen stove? "There's Victory in Victuals."

VAN DEMAN:

Go ahead. You won't even have to ask permission of the lady who wrote it - Mary Taylor, editor of Consumers' Guide. I'm sure those are her fighting words.

KADDERLY:

"There's victory in victuals." That covers a lot of territory. And, Ruth, what about copies of these market lists and menus for any of our Farm and Home friends who might like them?

VAN DEMAN:

We've had some extra copies run off. Yes, we'll send them as long as the supply holds out.

KADDERLY:

Address requests as usual to the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture?

VAN DEMAN:

That's right. And ask for "Mrs. America Volunteers."

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